



Aerial photograph of the Rutgers University campus and surrounding New Brunswick, NJ area. The image shows a dense concentration of buildings, roads, and green spaces. In the upper right, the university's main campus is visible, featuring large modern buildings and older brick structures. To the left, a residential neighborhood with numerous houses is shown. A major highway with several interchanges runs along the top edge of the frame. The lower half of the image shows a mix of residential buildings, commercial structures, and industrial areas. A river or large body of water is visible in the far upper right corner.

VOLUME 47 ISSUE 2 // April / May 2014

**R**

THE RUTGERS REVIEW

GOT MILK? // BEACH BOYS // JOB HUNT // GRayscale // FRACTAL



**I went to Rutgers and all  
I got was this unemployment**  
**pg. 7**

**Does this article even lift?**  
**pg. 12**

**Nerdfighters can't even  
right now**  
**pg. 18**

**Let's talk about crime**  
**pg. 20**

**All songs are created equal**  
**pg. 26**

**Nostalgic for the now**  
**pg. 32**

**Telling our kids exactly  
how it is**  
**pg. 35**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### CULTURE

- 6 Communication Generation
- 7 Application for Dehumanization
- 8 Conformity Isn't Just for Artists Anymore
- 9 YOU+ME+MOM
- 10 Some Words About Graduating
- 12 A Bro and his Brotege
- 13 Why We Suck at Public Transportation

### ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

- 14 Back to Black (And White)
- 16 Mixed Media
- 18 Beauty in the Fault Lines

### FEATURE

- 20 Crime Alert!

### MUSIC

- 26 Similar Sentiments
- 28 Top Albums of 2014 (So Far)
- 30 Searching for Smile

### POTPOURRI

- 31 Why Cows Say Moo!
- 32 Pressure and Pleasure
- 34 An Immigrant
- 35 To My Future Kids
- 36 Flowers
- 37 Condict Street is Collapsing
- 38 For Jake
- 39 Dear Future Lover



page 10



page 20



page 37

## CONTRIBUTORS



**DEVIN BAKER** is a political science and economics double major who really loves North Jersey. He prides himself on mixing politics with satire, so it's convenient that he's Managing Editor of *The Medium*. When he's not spreading satirical snark, Devin is probably running (15-18 miles a week, but who's counting?) or driving his 1989 Honda Civic, a car that's older than him. A new addition to the *Review* team, Devin has brought a fresh perspective, a snazzy haircut, and a hell of a lot of ambition. As graduation approaches, we're sad to see him go, but we know it's not the last we'll see of Mr. Baker; soon enough, his name will surface in political elections and we'll be voting for him, no doubt. After all, any guy driven enough to take on not one, but two Rutgers publications has more masochistic talent than any other name in the ballot box.

***Conformity Isn't Just For Artists Anymore, page 8***



**CARLO DE LA RAMA** is a friendly, talkative Masters student who hails from Jersey City. For the most part, Carlo's just a regular guy who likes food, making new friends, and exploring New York City. But this Human Resource Management major has a few bold dreams that have nothing to do with his education, including being a dog walker and owning a coffee shop. Carlo also wants to write a piece for the *Journal*, and just going by what he's done for the *Review*, that can very soon be a reality. He's also spent a good portion of his life in the tropics of the Philippines, a good nine years that color his genuine and open personality. To top it all off, he once had the honor of shaking Anderson Cooper's hand—sources say it was "warm."

***Why We Suck at Transportation, page 13***



**MOHAMMAD NASER** is a man of many trades—struggling grad student by day, mysterious photographer by night, simply going by M.A. Naser. Like many of us, he came to Rutgers from Bangladesh to study Biomedical Engineering. Mohammad is fascinated by humanity and how we survive, live, and love, so naturally he has his hands full at the *Review*. Contrary to popular belief, his favorite basketball player is not Chicago Bulls backup center Nazr Mohammed. He has only been with the *Review* for a year, but in that time, he has wowed us with his skill, charmed us with his smile and photographed (one of) us in the 4th floor of the Rutgers Student Center with a poncho he assured me was clean. Mohammad is, from all accounts, a truly decent guy.

***Featured in our Photo Issue 2014***



I've been feeling a lot of feels lately, as I come to the end of my college career. In contemplating writing this, my final letter from the editor, I wrestled with what to say and how to say it. How do I leave my final mark? What words of wisdom can I leave you all with, and how can I tie them into everything you find within this 40-page book? So I've decided to leave you with advice, words internalized through my four years on *The Rutgers Review* staff:

Take what you get and do what you can. Life is hard and will knock you down, but what matters most is how you pick yourself back up again. Take the opportunities that come your way, no matter how much they may differ from your original intentions, and just let them happen. Let life happen.

You feel how you feel when you feel it. Own your emotions, and never let anyone question the legitimacy of how you respond to the world around you. Your feelings are yours and yours alone, entirely shaping your unique human experience.

The musings within this magazine are ultimately a compilation of the Rutgers experience—the emotions, the stresses, the joys, and the pains. As some of us move forward into the expansive, frightening future, it's truly our time to shine, but it's also our time to fail, to learn, to grow, and to live. And, ultimately, that's all there is.

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# COMMUNICATION GENERATION

BY MELANIE COSTELLO

As I am sucked into a Rutgers bus, I notice how we are quarantined together like sardines. Yet somehow, we still manage to pop out that iPhone like it's an Invisibility Cloak from Harry Potter. We don't dare look into the eyes of a stranger. That would be way too intimate—no one wants to look like a creep-o. Yet one look at a crowded bus abroad, and you'll see that Americans created the idea of "awkward." This may be why there is not an exact term for it in many other languages. Our diminishing communication skills are obviously a product of modernization.

In Argentina, smartphones haven't taken over. They're still on that BlackBerry grind. When I studied abroad there, I would use my cell on rare occasions, only to express simple, pragmatic messages like, "Hey, meet you at the corner." Buenos Aires is a modern urban capital city that is even larger than New York. (It's the third largest city in Latin America.) The people there did not speak with strangers as frequently as in the Dominican Republic, where everyone is overtly smiley, going out of their way to greet one another, exhibiting much better communication skills than we possess. Popular chill spots are authentic cafés (which have much more personality than the multinational corporations), where the check is not automatically served to you and phones are out of sight. Argentines who have visited the United States told me they found it rude for waiters to distribute a customer's check without request. The United States' goal is to get cus-

tomers in and out, fast fast fast, and achieve the most profit out of each table. This culture is a liquid life—people cannot grasp the moment. However, money is a priority here and time is money.

Yesterday, I was on a train during rush hour. I saw that the majority were zombies fixated on their smartphones or iPads. A professor was writing an email. A boy was even watching a movie. We were all practically

caressing one another. It was a unique diverse crowd, all together, but alone in our own artificial worlds.

I myself was glancing sporadically at my phone. Note the trend of a technological dependency wave taking place in this generation. I don't hold a prescription nor propose it is entirely negative. Being dependent on anything is lethal, whether it is on people, drugs, or technology. And in the end, it leaves us vulnerable.

I know I'm not the first to realize this, and there are parts of this society actively making a change. Take, for example, the restaurants in New York that confiscate your cellular device upon arrival. In return, they discount your dinner. This is a nice political prescription that motivates you to better appreciate both your food and your company. Perhaps things like this will make the rest of us think a little, and communicate verbally more openly. Embrace the life around you with people, because no one will reminisce the good times with Siri. 

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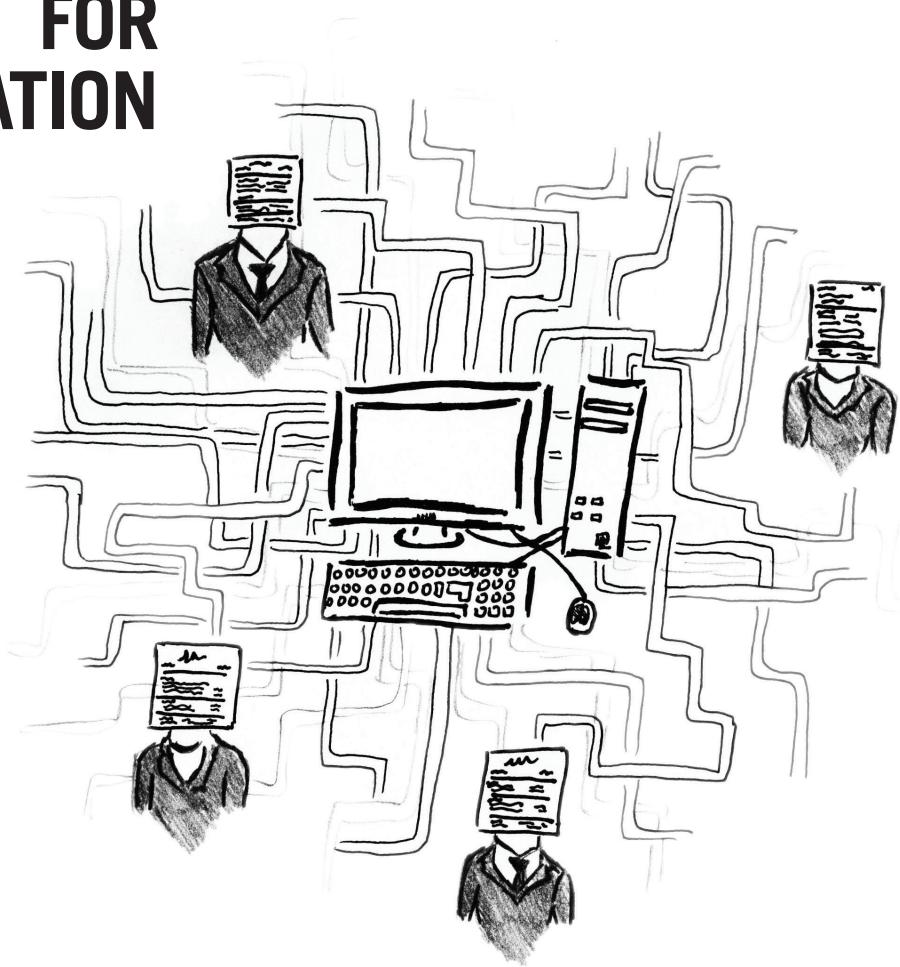
# APPLICATION FOR DEHUMANIZATION

WORDS BY LIZZIE ROBERTS  
ILLUSTRATION BY VICTOR WONG

I feel utterly dehumanized by the job hunt. Trying to fit who you are and what you do onto one sheet of paper and into one meager application does not equate to why anyone should hire anyone. We, as job seekers, are shrunk down to words on paper; fillers in an empty space, ready to be replaced by the next hungry millennial searching to “have the opportunity” to work in an entry-level job, “should we be lucky enough that you consider us for this position.”

Every job I’ve applied to (about fifty or sixty) has been online, through an algorithm that picks key words out of one single sheet of paper and is designed to sum up all of my skills, leadership positions, and education. Throughout this tireless process, which is a job all on its own, I’ve come to wonder how it is possible that people can be reduced to an impersonal cluster of words designed to summarize who I am and what I did in my four short years here at Rutgers. Granted, this isn’t the best economy for a job hunt, despite the false hope promised to our generation that jobs would be available as we graduate, and that we wouldn’t be swimming in massive amounts of debt. However, there exists a definite disparity between the amount of money we are expected to pay back and the salary paid to entry-level employees. There has only been a minimal increase in salary since the time our parents were job hunting.

Entering this constrained job market is tough enough without the added stress of trying to find one of those few occupations through an online application where you are



stripped of your humanity, made into another candidate reduced down to fit into a computer to be chosen (or not). Job hunters feel commodified, like factory products, all lined up in neat rows ready to be bought by an employer. No person should be made into a commodity. But this is the system we’ve come to know, operating under American consumerism. Weeding out candidates through an algorithm is the easy way to go in reducing the sheer volume of applicants. However, though the path isn’t clear, there has to be a less mechanical way to select prospective candidates.

In a world where the competition for a job is less demanding, this system could be reformed so that

candidates are truly analyzed not only by a computer but by interviewers as well. Someone who sits down, looks at all of these applications, and screens the ones that they believe could have a fighting chance in whatever job they’ve applied for. These interviewers could then call potential candidates and conduct a pre-interview phone interview, further deciding if candidates are able to proceed. Just by doing this, we will have created more jobs, as well as made entering the professional world a rejuvenating experience, not a method of selling your soul. **R**



# CONFORMITY ISN'T JUST FOR ARTISTS ANYMORE

BY DEVIN BAKER

As preferences shift, whether it's the changing of personal style or speaking with proper grammar in public, we mature naturally, transforming into adults. I question how much of this alteration is something we bring about ourselves. We see what other "grown-ups" are doing and what they look like, then attempt to match them. I see myself slowly beginning to conform.

Society expects us to look "proper" for the work environment. I would like a job some day, and in order to do that, I need a cleaner appearance. This means not growing out a beard, having a somewhat-conservative haircut, all accompanied with the basic button-up shirts and slacks. I, for example, have had a lot of different cuts throughout the years, ranging from the Bieber bowlcut to shaving half of my head. Neither of these, I think, would be suitable for the workplace.

All I wear are skinny jeans and tight shirts with Converse. My red jeans brighter than Santa Claus' outfit and a Cap'n Crunch shirt that I got off the cereal box are not quite mature garb. Since I do not plan on becoming a famous musician, is it appropriate for me to wear stuff like this? Can an adult wear bright red skinny jeans and still be taken seriously? I like my clothes and I don't care if others think it's weird. But maybe in a few years, my outlook on this will begin to change.



Are Converse business casual?

Though I should probably be more responsible and organized, I am unsure if I will look like everyone else. People should look the way they want to look. I hope that individuals are not being pressured to give up what has made them unique. Perhaps this is something we just assume should happen to us. Maybe we automatically think that conformity is the only way to live our lives in the "correct" way.

When we are young, we want to be older. When we reach that older age, we want to be young again. This is why it is vital to maintain some sort of past in our present. This can mean holding onto clothes, books, electronics, or anything once important. That way, there will always be something from our old self that will never disappear.

People don't realize that they change so much throughout their lifetime in regards to the kind of person they are—internally and externally. In ten years, I do not want to be walking down the street, bumping into someone, with them failing to recognize me. This will reveal that I have become so different that they can't figure out my identity in terms of my appearance. There may be a day when I wear khakis and sweater-vests even though I wish for this day never to come. My goal is to avoid becoming a "lame adult" for as long as possible. **R**



# YOU +ME+ MOM

BY JOE DILEO

I recently read an article advocating the benefits of chaperoned courtship for teenagers and young adults. The practice is typically characterized by parentally-supervised dates, frequent family gatherings, and a restraint from almost all physical contact right up to the wedding kiss. I could imagine that for someone growing up in a religiously conservative community, chaperoned courtship is a highly esteemed and anticipated rite of passage just like a first kiss or a first date may be in mainstream American culture. As a person who experienced high school and college with no parental or religious restrictions on dating, it's intriguing to ponder what such an experience may actually be like.

Imagine dating a person in this fashion. Right in front of you is an innocent creature whose eyes and skin sparkle with such a lively purity. You may spend your whole future together but right now all you can do is slowly delve into their untainted soul and learn about them—what makes them tick and what lights up their eyes—all while wondering about the softness of those innocent lips and the forbidden touch of a waist-level embrace. Soon you know almost everything about their soul but nothing about their body and that becomes both the first and last frontier in itself. On that one fine day they'll blossom for you and it would be both

everything you've ever dreamed of and the only thing you'll ever know.

Having adults holding your hand all the way up to the altar is definitely a simplified, sterilized expressway that bypasses an obscene amount of uncertainty, guilt, and angst. Yet the ability to discover the nuances and intricacies of love is like a new swimmer being chucked into a pool. I remember the fidgety, dreamy scenarios like leaning over my bicycle handlebars for my first kiss or another time believing silly young love to be the ultimate redemption of my existence. Ultimately, these feelings are all intertwined within youthful memories.

My culture taught me that finding your way in love was a part of growing up rather than the end result of finally being grown up. The golden naivety of the teen years is such a warm, nostalgic time to look back on; not only for the experiences themselves, but the fact that they are wholly mine. They are results of my own personal missteps or successes en route to adulthood. To have adults aid heavily in courtship is to remove the true essence of the journey, the trip that leaves you slightly beaten, all the more wiser, and truly happy and relieved when it finally settles down.

Yet with all that being said, most of those fantastic “firsts” are long behind me and left cooling, all peppered somewhere throughout my high school, and the college town I currently call home. Perhaps if I held back, I'd still have some of those experiences lying ahead of me, ensuring that early adulthood would be something greater than a few more numbing trips around the block. 



# SOME WORDS ABOUT GRADUATING

BY POOJA KOLLURI

Whether you are a few weeks away from slipping on that sexy cap and gown or looking eagerly toward unremembered nights in sophomore year, you, dear Rutgers student, came here with a purpose in mind: to graduate. To leave from these four years, adult, and ready to sit at a desk for your 2 to 3 years of experience, before you can do what you really want to do for the next 40 years.

Right? Isn't that the formula? We are so used to separating our lives into blocks of years because it's all we've known. Education is a set plan we all follow and allow to shape our memories. It's not wrong, for the most part. In general, we benefit from things that construct the broad nature of life.

Yet, the structure of school is not forever. These set periods of time only last for about a fifth of our life span. I didn't realize this, four years ago, as I rolled all my belongings in a large gray bin into the elevator of Tinsley Hall. I had thought it was four more years here at college and then I'd have a job because I'd definitely get that internship I was supposed to have at some point. I didn't have much more foresight than that at the ripe age of 18—maybe I wasn't worried enough about my future. I assumed that the world would take care of me, just as it has for the past two decades.

But that's not reality. Until I realised last semester that I wasn't going to graduate on time, I drove myself crazy, taking five to six classes a semester in an attempt to finish a double major along with a minor. It sounded doable from a high school perspective—back then, I had six classes a day with time to spare. But college is strange. It's an ameboid form fit into a square, and it fools you into thinking you can handle the pressure.

As a function of being both a Journalism and an English major, writing no longer became something I enjoyed, but an arduous task I had to do, rushing to bullshit four to five papers every few weeks. Art requires some love, and love requires time. Taking four writing intensive

courses at once doesn't leave time for much, other than breathing. Couldn't I have spread out my classes and graduated, happy and relaxed, in five years instead? But wanting to leave here "on time" kept my doubts at bay and drove me into a hole of stress, self-doubt, and inevitably, depression.

This pressure to graduate in four years or less glitters with the promise of a happy future. Primarily, going beyond four years is perhaps a financial taboo, which, of course, is an excellent reason to push yourself. My parents had the marginal luxury to tell me that they didn't feel like the past four years were a waste of money if it meant I learned more about what I need to succeed and be happy, and that an extra semester is affordable enough. The majority isn't granted such space, however—nobody wants to be paying off more loans than they already have to. We'd all probably take a couple of more years if the cost of college wasn't so debilitating. This, mixed in with the job market's attraction to younger applicants and the feeling of taking a selfie at graduation with all your friends around you is more than enough to persuade anyone that four years of school is enough. But this is a generalization that doesn't have to apply to everyone, and if you're a little different, it's okay.

College is reckless abandon. It's a blurred brush stroke in a bold color that will both blend into your future and be set apart at the same time. It should not be a rigid set of years dedicated solely to deciding who you'll be. If you need more time, take it. We'll be growing and learning all our lives, but your college years are designated for exactly that. Here, we experiment, understand, and transition, from the sure, innocent freshman we were to the confused, enlightened graduates we end up being. If you don't graduate in four years, you haven't failed anybody. You have only failed to meet a statistic, an unwritten rule, a constraint that was placed on your head since your parents opened up a 529 plan. 

# A BRO AND HIS BROTEGE

BY DALTON MACK  
COLLAGE BY NICK PERRONE

There comes a time in most young men's lives where they realize that they are small. To remedy this psychological affliction, they head to their local gym in hopes of putting on a few pounds. However, it's a fool's errand to try and go it alone. You need someone willing to guide a young greenhorn through the wilderness of the iron jungle. You must become their brotege.

Anyone can pop into their local Retro Fitness and mess around with a few dumbbells and machines hoping to get swole/housed/ripped or become a genetic beast lobster. But without an established gym sage guiding you on your way, you venture into a land of misleading bro-science, improper form, and half-repping—crimes against humanity in the gym.

Recently, I took a young man, green as clover in the morning dew, under my wing to show him the ropes and more importantly, the squat rack. I was dealing with a former baseball player here, so we had a lot in common. A solid six-foot-tall youngster, but consistently weighing in below 160 pounds and fearful of



becoming skinny-fat, he knew he had to make some moves. Knowing I was a regular gym-goer, he asked to tag along and for me to share my workout plan with him. I obliged, with the understanding that our first few sessions would be devoted to learning proper form on the main lifts: the squat, deadlift, overhead, and bench press. Within a few days, his form was on point, better than the bulk of College Ave Gym denizens. Over the next few months, he moved from training wheels (plates weighing 25 pounds or below) to some real daddy weight. The day he put up a solid eight reps on the bench with 45s on each side was quite the moving experience for the both of us. It was akin to a bar mitzvah—Ryan was finally a man.

There were many lessons to impart, and he soaked them up like a ficus desperate for water. These included:

The importance of whey over soy protein, so that you can build

some solid muscle without running the risk of going from an A to a B-cup (it was a rough time in my life, let's not talk about it).

After a set, the importance of offering words of encouragement, and occasionally two swift pats on the back, colloquially known as "the dolphin."

If you ever do curls in the squat rack, our relationship will now and forever be terminated.

The gym buddy is more than simply someone who spots you and refills your water while you're off securing the squat rack; he's your relationship counselor, motivational speaker, and psychoanalyst. It's a bond built by mutual respect and devotion to a full range of motion.

Two weeks ago, he turned to me as we were getting our sweatshirts out of the locker, and said, "Thanks for helping me get big." I'd be lying if I said a tear didn't come to my eye. **R**



# WHY WE SUCK AT PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

WORDS BY CARLO DE LA RAMA  
ART BY NICOLLE ROCHINO

If you grew up in a city consisting of big buildings, ghettos, and bodegas, then you understand that life in the street can be risqué for the uninitiated. The grand city of New Brunswick demands special considerations for city slickers, Brooklyn bangers, and movie-night suburbanites alike.

What is up with my fellow students and the RU Buses? Perhaps I can make a little case: Little gingerly Joe Jabroni from Cherry Hill is accustomed to having his Mommy drive him to his best friend's house so that they can hang out, play video games, and talk about their wishful relationships with Taylor Swift all night long. They would never visit each other by bus. Ever.

Now, in freshman year: Day one. From Quad 2, taking the bus to Scott Hall 123: Joe exits the bus, not saying thank you to the driver, and crosses the street in front of the bus without looking out for cars. Consequently, he gets hit and loses his leg—sorry, almost loses his leg (the prior is too graphic). Although Gingerly Joe Jabroni is entirely a made-up person, the accidents across Scott Hall have in fact happened.

Can we talk? I once drove my 1999 Nissan Sentra towards the stop coming from the Rutgers Student Center. The LX stopped in front to let students

disembark. As I went carefully to drive ahead of the bus, I had to hit my brakes and endure a mini-heart attack. I almost killed the 2012 star player of our Rutgers Basketball team, because he decided that it was a good idea to charge across the street with his eyes forward and his Beats headphones on blast while crossing in front of the bus.

Look inside a municipal NJ Transit Bus, e.g., the "Montgomery/Westside" bus of Jersey City, and you will see the words "DO NOT CROSS IN FRONT OF THE BUS" written clearly, front-and-center. In fact, if our great leader Bobby Barchi wrote just one email, perhaps under 140 characters, it ought to say "DO NOT CROSS IN FRONT OF THE RUTGERS BUSES." One ounce of Barchi-prevention is worth a pound of Barchi-condolences from accident victims. Crime alerts and intercollegiate mergers are starting to become cliché on his subject lines.

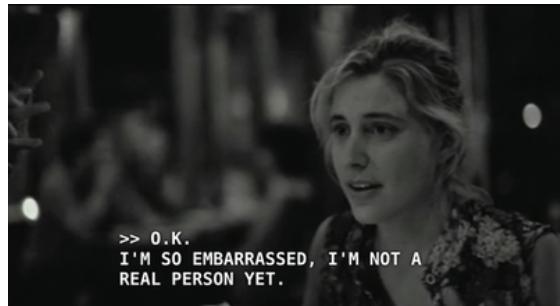
There are many questionable issues inside the buses, like uncovered sneezing, e-cigarette puffing, and booty brushing. That's the bus driver's problem. But once anyone steps off the bus, you're on your own. Stay cripple-free my fellow students. 

# BACK TO BLACK (AND WHITE)

BY GIOIA KENNEDY

Recently, there has been a return to black and white movies in cinema. In 2013 alone, two films that have received critical acclaim were filmed in black and white: *Nebraska*, directed by Alexander Payne, and *Frances Ha*, directed by Noah Baumbach. This return to black and white film not only represents a nostalgia for old cinema, but also proves the point that a good story doesn't need fancy pyrotechnics or special effects. It reminds viewers that film is an art form to be analyzed and appreciated as such.

The first film I saw in the theaters in black and white was 2011's *The Artist*, directed by Michel Hazanavicius. Not only is the film in black and white, but it is primarily a silent film. Sometimes the story drags, but the point is clear: even a silent film can provide viable entertainment in modern cinema. Ironically, it came two years after James Cameron's triumphant "masterpiece," *Avatar*, which almost set a new standard for movie-making. Cameron's use of innovative visual effects and personalized virtual camera system certainly dazzled audiences (if you didn't see it in 3D you definitely missed out), but ultimately couldn't distract from the fact that the



storyline was a regurgitated star-crossed lovers romance. *The Artist* also arrived just as most movie theaters switched from showing real "film" to using digital projection, a bone of contention for many classic movie lovers.

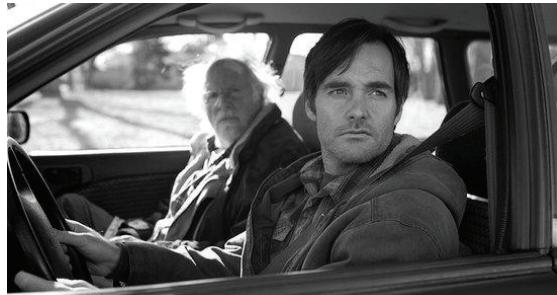


The return to black and white films strikes a nostalgic chord for film buffs like me. With any art form it's important to pay tribute to and respond to former works of art, while simultaneously creating something new. Many people dismiss watching older films that are black and white because they aren't as visually pleasing or perhaps because their lack of color somehow deems their stories to be outdated. Personally, I have related to the stories of many black and white films, probably because I don't think human nature has changed much over the past century.

In making black and white films, modern movie-makers are not only expressing their nostalgia for older cinema, but also proving that new stories can be told in an old medium. The film *Frances Ha* (available on Netflix and one of the best films of 2013 IMO, so YOU should watch it!) tells the story of Frances, a dancer living in New York City, who isn't sure of what she wants to do, who she is, how she feels, or anything at all, really. Even though she's 27, Frances' character, combined with Baumbach's directing style, reminds me of the *The 400 Blows*, a coming-of-age story of the young teenager Antoine,

directed by Francois Truffaut. *Frances Ha* suggests that in modern days, many people don't "grow up" until their mid-twenties, which is certainly a new take on an old story first told by Truffaut. Baumbach's depiction and the way he romanticizes New York City is obviously reminiscent of Woody Allen's films, most notably *Manhattan*, which was also shot in black and white.

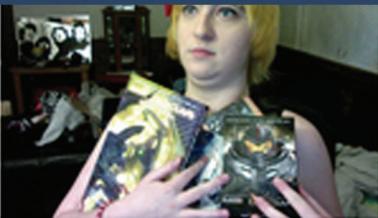
The second black and white film of this year, *Nebraska*, uses this style to tell the unique story of father and son duo Woody and David Grant, who share some touching moments on their journey to Nebraska to pick up Woody's supposed lottery winnings. Payne's use of black and white is also for nostalgic purposes, but not to remind the viewer of old cinema. The black and white sets a tone for the melancholic story with achingly beautiful landscapes and portraits of people reminiscent of photographs taken during the Great Depression. These depictions complement the gloomy, yet poignant storyline.



If you're still unsure of whether you can tolerate sitting through a black and white film, you should watch *Clerks* (also available on Netflix) which was produced in black and white solely for budget purposes, but is so funny and relatable. I'm not sure if it's a good thing, but it will certainly make anyone who's ever worked in the service industry groan along with its main characters and clerks, Dante and Randal.



I hope the reemergence of black and white cinema prevails and helps more people develop a palate for older films, which are still relevant in the modern era. When directors choose to film in black and white, they are making a conscious choice to opt for an older medium of art. Filming in black and white, although a more classic style than color, can sometimes give more life, and paradoxically provide more relevance to contemporary stories. **R**



i;m not obsessed YOU'RE obsessed

#lay down #try not to think about pacific rim #fail and start crying #my kawaii face

13 notes



# MIXED MEDIA

I'm not sorry my fandom gets in the way of real life.

If you ask me, real life gets in the way of my fandom.



BY TONI KWADZOGAH

This is probably a really obvious statement, but films have come a long way. Like, really long. They've moved from grainy black-and-white 30-second-long soundless snippets of moving pictures, to high-definition bright-hued 2+ hour-long extravaganzas filled to the brim with insane sound design and even more insane stories to tell. Could you imagine trying to make *Pacific Rim* in 1939? When a movie like *The Wizard of Oz* was considered cutting edge during its release? For all the faults that can be said about Hollywood, the elevation of movie-making is one that deserves a round of applause.

In the same vein of elevation and innovation, I'm noticing a trend that I personally think has been a long time coming—mixing media. The first time it caught my attention was after I saw *Donnie Darko*. Remember that movie? It was probably one of the weirdest movies I'd ever seen, and in true Toni fashion, I spent two weeks trying to learn everything about it. From the filmography of the actors to the minutiae on the sets, I devoured it all. In my studies, I stumbled across *Darko's* official website. Then fan forums. Then, copies of *The Philosophy of Time Travel*, the in-universe book that *Donnie* is given, which basically explains how the entire plot works. After coming across all of this wild shit, I thought to myself, "Now, why the hell wasn't all this in the movie to begin with!?"

At first, my response was what you would expect: they (the Movie Studio Heads that film geeks like to rail over) just wanted to make an extra buck. Why else would they leave out crucial chunks of the plot of the film, only to sell them to us in a director's cut two years after the theatrical release?

And then it hit me: now who (aside from myself and maybe 30 other people) would want to sit through an extra 20 minutes of exposition, and then maybe add another five on top of that in a montage scene of *Donnie* reading *Time Travel* in a voiceover? No one, that's who.

Aside from the fandom, that is. Yes, those wild, teeming masses of people who lust after extra tidbits from media products, then construct wild, impossible scenarios from them. Or, as I like to refer to them, my people.

How else do you explain this? To wit, *Pacific Rim* is a little over two hours long. But there's also a novelization of the film with dossiers on

the characters and alternating perspectives of scenes; the graphic novel (*Pacific Rim: Tales from Year Zero*) which tells you about the first kaiju attack (August 11, 2013, to be exact), again with alternating perspectives, from how the Jaegers were developed (and yes, you probably guessed right, it was the Americans who had the nerve to suggest using big ass robots to fight space eldritch horror monsters), to more of Mako Mori and Stacker Pentecost's backstories. And then you have the compendium, the mother of all supplemental source texts, *Pacific Rim: Man, Machines, and Monsters*, which gives you all sorts of worldbuilding stuff—the birth dates of the characters, concept art, photography. This doesn't even cover the work put together by fans, which includes fan sites, wikias, and the widespread amount of fanfiction sprinkled across the internet.

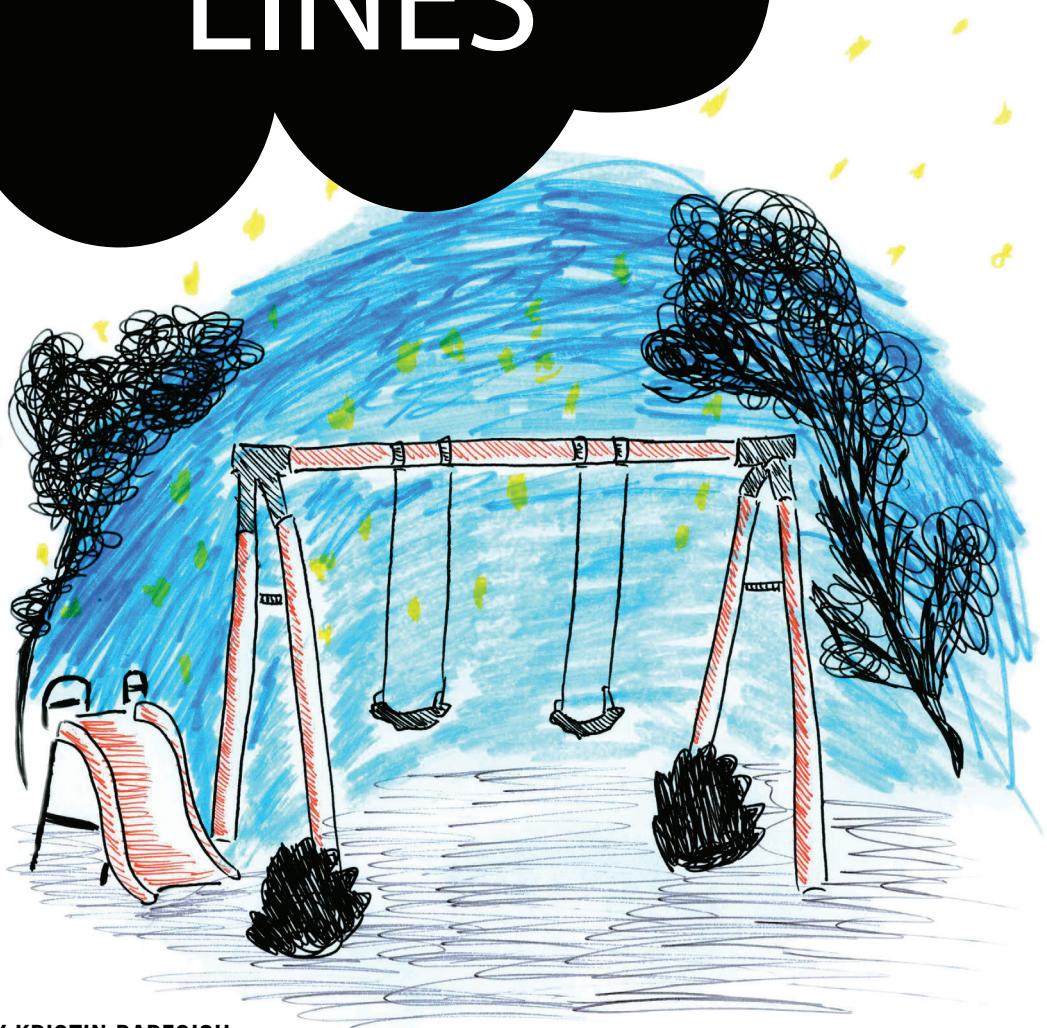
It seems like, to me, at least, an extremely noble and amazing attempt at more expansive worldbuilding. It makes sense. There's only so much you can do with two hours. So why not, let's give the moviegoers what they need in terms of exposition, and then, for the people who are really into it, blow their minds with all of the work from behind the scenes.

At least, that's what I would do.

And this isn't to say that this happens purposefully, at least. Even works that don't have huge amounts of worldbuilding already built in have fandoms, of one or many, that try to "fill in the gaps"; that try to explain how the science works, sew up plot points, hell, even try to figure out what laundry day is like in the Shatterdome (I may or may have not spent an hour or six reading some *Pacific Rim* fanfiction in preparation for this article).

Honestly, it's stuff like this that really makes me excited about the future of film. I haven't even covered television, but my general reaction will be the same: unmitigated enthusiasm. We have so many different ways of telling stories, so many ways of blending things together to construct the worlds inside our heads, so many ways of showing and sharing our experiences and ideas and dreams with each other, and y'know, that's pretty damn awesome. 

# BEAUTY IN THE FAULT LINES



BY KRISTIN BARESICH  
ILLUSTRATION BY VICTOR WONG

“Sometimes, you read a book and it fills you with this weird evangelical zeal, and you become convinced that the shattered world will never be put back together unless and until all living humans read the book. And then there are books which you can’t tell people about, books so special and rare and yours that advertising your affection feels like a betrayal.”

- *The Fault in Our Stars*, page 33

John Green’s *The Fault in Our Stars* is one of the best books I’ve read. Yet if we’re going by the system that Hazel, the 16-year-old protagonist, uses to classify her favorite books, it would seem that I’ve lumped this one into the slightly inferior category of having inspired evangelical zeal. (Assuming that writing an article about it qualifies as zeal.) Resisting the urge to advertise your affection for said book, on the other hand, is clearly the more exalted form of appreciation. But let’s face it—*The Fault in Our Stars* is not anybody’s secret anymore, if it ever was. It’s drowning in a thousand prestigious accolades and glowing reviews, and isn’t that girl from “The Secret Life of the American Teenager” starring in the movie version? It’s safe to say that people know about it. So why add another voice to this crowded conversation?

Throughout *The Fault in Our Stars*, the characters try to wrap their heads around this issue of being unknown versus known, as it applies to themselves as well as the people and the world around them. Is it better to tread lightly and leave no trace, or to dig your initials into the proverbial tree trunk? We can all get a little existentialist at times, but Hazel and Augustus are two teenagers who have cancer, and they are continually assaulted with the uncertainty of their situation and how it impacts their understanding of life. They don’t necessarily see eye-to-eye on the best way to reconcile with it: Augustus is captivated by the idea of noble sacrifice and imbuing all his acts with great significance, and is haunted by the thought that he is more likely to die of an illness rather than for a cause that means something. Hazel, meanwhile, doesn’t understand Gus’ need to remain in the large-scale collective memory. The fact that she matters to the people who know and care about her is enough for her to be content.

But despite the inherent sadness of their situation, they explore their surroundings with an infectious curiosity, showing themselves to be avid

enthusiasts of life in general. What is especially nice is how they recognize and praise each other for their capacity for appreciation. Gus is convinced that Hazel is “the only teenager in America who likes reading poetry better than writing it,” while Hazel is floored that Gus makes the effort to peruse a museum’s online collection when he is denied the opportunity to see the real thing in person. (“While the mass of men went on leading thoroughly unexamined lives of monstrous consumption,” she writes, “Augustus examined the collection of the Rijksmuseum from afar.”) Our culture places a premium on self-expression, but too often that has the effect of promoting the writers and the talkers at the expense of the readers and the listeners.

It is clear through moments like these, sprinkled in various contexts throughout the book, that Green is struck by the quality of reverence—not in the strictly religious sense, but in the way that one is prone to respecting and noticing and savoring rather than mindlessly existing or taking things for granted. Or worse yet, trying to force your enduring mark upon the world, when you should maybe take a step back and see what the world has to offer you. As Hazel’s dad tells her, the universe enjoys its elegance being observed—from the artistry of nature to the symmetry of mathematics. The universe wants to be noticed. As individuals, we want our lives to matter in the grand scheme of things, “for the universe to give a shit about us,” as Hazel puts it, but things that are bigger than ourselves are what endure, and we are the ones who should be paying attention.

And this is why we talk about books even when there may be nothing new left to say. In a world where people spend far too many words bemoaning the millennial generation, trying to keep up with the Kardashians, or pursuing other fruitless endeavors, it is refreshing to talk about something that is so authentic and poignant.

Because, quite simply, it’s always worth talking about books that matter. Because although this book may not put the shattered world back together, it brings out the beauty in the fault lines. Because the things in our lives, the subtle glances, the swing sets, and the stars that we squint to see deserve our attention. Because the universe deserves to be noticed. 

# CRIME ALERT!!!!!!

## KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

- **YOU DO NOT HAVE TO ANSWER QUESTIONS ASKED BY POLICE AND LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENTS**
  
- **YOU HAVE THE CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT TO SPEAK WITH A LAWYER BEFORE ANSWERING QUESTIONS**
  
- **ANYTHING YOU SAY CAN BE USED AGAINST YOU**
  
- **IF AN OFFICER THREATENS YOU WITH A GRAND JURY SUBPOENA YOU STILL HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN SILENT**



## **CHARLIE KRATOVIL IS THE EDITOR OF *NEW BRUNSWICK TODAY*, THE CITY'S MOST USED LOCAL NEWS SOURCE, AND A COMMUNITY ORGANIZER.**

**INTERVIEW BY SARAH BETH KAYE**

**RR:** Could you talk about police jurisdiction of the Rutgers police force and the New Brunswick police force?

**CK:** We received reports in December from very reliable sources that there had been changes made in the areas where Rutgers police had the power to enforce motor vehicle laws. This type of authority is called Title 39 authority [...] where you can give a ticket for something like driving while intoxicated, driving dangerously, speeding, running a red light, or running a stop sign. And basically what happened was there was a large area where Rutgers police had been permitted to have this type of enforcement and that area had been cut back very sharply and suddenly, with no real reason given. So what we did was we looked into it and had other sources confirm the information. We instantly publicized this major change that had been secretly made, and quite frankly had appeared to be made for an inappropriate reason. [...] In practice what happened

was that Rutgers police were essentially stranded on campus. They were not given the authority to do motor vehicle enforcement [anywhere] outside of the campus and one block over. The New Brunswick Police Department defended their decisions by saying Rutgers is still totally welcome to enforce crime or criminal violations wherever they want to but in practice the Rutgers police were staying in the areas where they have full powers. [...] What we saw was tremendous decrease in police presence in this neighborhood. [...] They don't tell you where the cops are going every day but if you listen to the police scanner and you talk to people in the neighborhood they will tell you that for years, and certainly a lot more since December, this place is no man's land. New Brunswick police didn't take responsibility for it and Rutgers police didn't take responsibility for it and as a result there were a lot of crimes happening against students. There was a really unfortunate streak of crime that happened against students in the early part of this year after the changes were made, and so the combination of public pressure from our newspaper shining a light on these strong changes combined with the unfortunate tragedies of the young man being killed and crimes against students happening that it put enough pressure on the police departments. [...] Ever since Rutgers police became official in the '70s, there's always been this turf war between New Brunswick and Rutgers and nobody knew what was going on. So the really big, huge step that we took was started with a small thing: we filed an Open Public Records Request to

get copies of the maps that show where Rutgers is allowed to go and not allowed to go and we submitted our request the same day we broke the story. As soon as we got this information we immediately tried to back it up. To get the records, to get the maps we filed the same exact OPRA request with Rutgers that we did with New Brunswick. As you may have seen in our reporting, Rutgers completely ignored our request and never responded and New Brunswick outright denied us and said [New Brunswick Today] doesn't have a right to get those maps because they're police materials and it's a secret. [...] Within a short time after that the city attacked me personally and attacked the newspaper by saying that we were going to endanger the public if we got these maps that we wanted. As a result of their attack on us, where they made unsubstantiated claims, we filed another public records request to obtain the Memorandum of Understanding between Rutgers and New Brunswick, and all the previous ones [as well] because they were pointing to this as such a great important document. We asked for those via the Public Records laws and before our court case could be heard New Brunswick turned over the maps, which were part of those MOU's between Rutgers and New Brunswick and just last Friday they sent us another map they had been holding on to. [...] The bottom line is we were only able to get those maps because we filed a lawsuit and I personally filed a lawsuit because I was denied in my public records request. I have a great attorney named Walter Lewers, a Rutgers alum, who took the case for free on a contingency basis. [...] We kind of got what we wanted but it's incumbent on New Brunswick and Rutgers to pay for my attorney now because we believe that we won. The city of course is fighting that because they don't want me to win, even though they gave us the maps. [...] At the end of the day we won and it was a really powerful victory because it

brought together a lot of people. It was more than just Charlie versus the city; it was our newspaper doing quality coverage and all the members of our team supporting what we were doing, but also concerned parents, concerned students, concerned residents who live in this neighborhood and didn't understand why the police coverage had been cut back. So at the end of the day it was a huge victory to get the maps but it was even bigger victory to get the city and Rutgers to start cooperating in a real way. [...] I mean, they got Rutgers cops riding in New Brunswick cop cars for the first time in history and it wouldn't have happened without the unfortunate

string of violence and also without so many people uniting and pushing for change, so it was really cool.

**RR:** What should students who live at Rutgers keep in mind about interacting with the police force?

**CK:** For a lot of reasons there's tension between Rutgers students and both the police forces. Obviously their roles are sometimes adversarial. There's a loud party and one of those two departments are going to end up getting a phone call or complaint and they will go over and break up the party. That's never fun.

But making it even trickier is we have the neighborhood that is probably most affected in the entire state by legislation that was passed by late Senator Frank Lautenberg in 1984. That legislation is the legislation that resulted in every state in the union, except one, raising the drinking age to 21. [...] Because of the 21-year-old drinking age law, downtown kind of gets quiet, after midnight, two in the morning, it starts to die down. Whereas Thursday, Friday, Saturday nights this neighborhood is pumpin'. This is the neighborhood where everybody is hordes of students, drunken people walking around the streets till four, five in the morning drinking in crowded private homes with no supervision, no last call. Sorts of things like that are kind of a



recipe for trouble. Whereas if the drinking age were 18, a lot of these bars would first of all do much better business and you know, there would be bouncers and bartenders supervising and there would be last call and it would also kind of keep the noise and craziness more towards the areas where there are commercial districts and business and downtown. [...] But, because of all that, there's all these constant struggles between the police and the students who many of them, god love them, drink underage. [...] Because of that vulnerability, the cops are in a position of greater authority to kind of get their way. The same thing happens with drugs. [...]

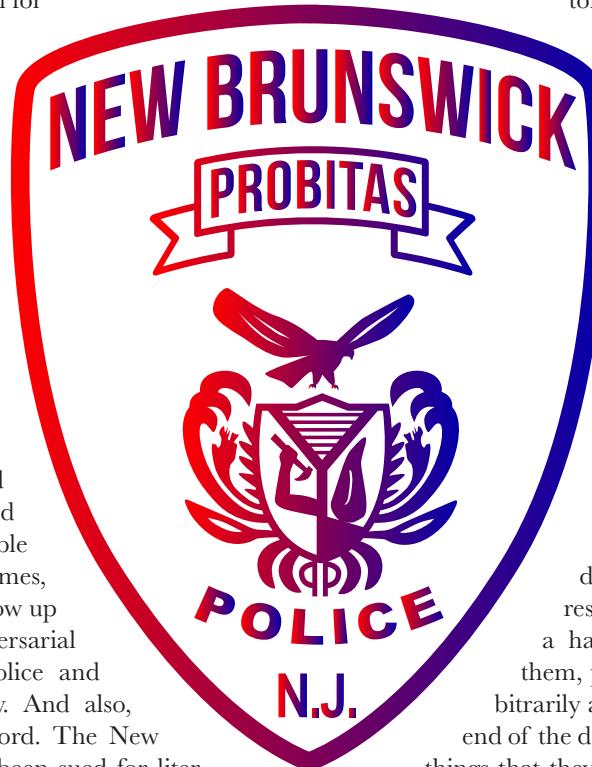
So, college, being known for alcohol and mariju-

na, puts the students in an automatically adversarial position to the police because they are committing a crime, though a lot of folks in their neighborhood and social circles might not think it should be a crime. [...] But they are committing, in some cases, serious crimes and can spend the night in jail and they're totally vulnerable to the cops. So a lot of times, before the cops even show up there's this kind of adversarial nature between the police and the student community. And also, there's a bad track record. The New

Brunswick police have been sued for literally waking students up by beating them up and guess what, they got the wrong apartment. It's the wrong door, so these innocent students were beaten up by New Brunswick police and Middlesex County Prosecutor's Office and they got something like \$120,000 settlement from taxpayers because of that. And so, people saw that news, people remember that and so when the New Brunswick police roll up on their house they think it could happen to them and it again strains the relationship further. There's also of course the police killing of Barry Deloatch. [...] Deloatch was an unarmed man who was not exactly a menacing man; he was not very big and he was kind of remembered as a gentle guy and

he was shot and killed by a New Brunswick police officer who didn't have his pepper spray on him, didn't have his batons on him, and resigned in disgrace after that. The mayor even gave \$1,000 from his campaign fund to help bury Barry Deloatch, to help pay for the funeral expenses, and if that's not a sign of culpability then I don't know what is. [...] There were also two individuals, including a Rutgers student, who were arrested at a protest march about a week after Barry was shot and killed. So you have a 19-year-old Rutgers student, a female, and all she did was refuse to move her bike onto the sidewalk which was very crowded with protesters and the police arrested her and she beat the charges. But you have these memories of these very stressful things where the cops had killed somebody and then they're arresting protesters who are protesting the killing and it's combined with what happened on Delafield Street last year. There's all these kind of high profile clashes with police where police aren't helping students, but police are arresting them or giving them a hard time, working against them, pepper spraying people arbitrarily and things like that. At the end of the day, people remember those

things that they heard in the news media and you also hear sometimes about, and this happens a lot in New Brunswick, too often, about somebody who called the police for help, maybe they were a victim of robbery or maybe somebody's been shot and the police will show up and charge the victim with possession of marijuana. [...] When people see those kinds of things, they really get annoyed and they feel like the cops aren't there to help them because they're afraid that if they call the cops when they're shot that they're gonna end up being the ones who are charged with crime, and it just kind of adds to that whole idea that the police aren't here to help me, the police are people to be looked out for, almost like a gang.



# PERSONAL PO-LICE ACCOUNTS

COLLECTED BY KATELYN DEVINE

"I have had very interesting experiences with crime in New Brunswick living on Plum Street. My house has actually been burglarized 3 times—a few thousand dollars worth of equipment and property have been stolen. Fortunately I have not been personally involved in any violent crime, but I live down the street from where Will McCaw was found, and I am always hyper-aware of my surroundings when I walk through the streets. I am not sure if there is tension in the lower income areas due to the gentrification pushing people out, or if it has to do with the political issues happening within and surrounding the city government. All I know is that I believe I am leaving New Brunswick at an appropriate time and am looking forward to holding on to my positive memories of it while admiring it with a few visits here and there."

- ERIC TAPPER

"From my experience, New Brunswick is made out to be much more dangerous than it really is. If you keep your ears and eyes open, and limit yourself to the areas just off College Ave where the population is mostly students, you should be fine. I've walked alone down Robinson St. at 3:30 AM and Hamilton St. at 4 AM [...] and nothing happened to me. Sure, there are break-ins sometimes, but generally I feel comfortable out here, on the corner of Hamilton and Louis. I'm living half a block away next year for that reason."

- MAX FREEDMAN

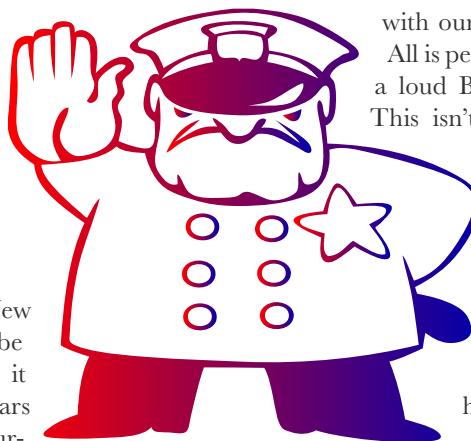
"It seems like much of the 'crime' that affects students in New Brunswick is associated with theft and break-ins. It would probably be smart to avoid having public parties or walking around with your iPhone or laptop in public. If you buy drugs off people you don't know well, or let strangers into your house while you are intoxicated, it is the perfect opportunity for them to see what you have of value and come back when you are either not there or are passed out and rob you."

- LAUREN JACQUISH

"So it's 2 AM and we're all tucked away in our beds with our teddy bears and our insomnia. All is peaceful in the world, until we hear a loud BANG coming from downstairs. This isn't particularly unusual for New Brunswick, so we don't think much of it, but when the next BANG is accompanied by glass shattering, we begin to panic a bit. I call 9-11 and the operator says she'll send someone over immediately, and meanwhile find somewhere to hide. I grab the nearest blunt instrument (literally in this case—

I grabbed a guitar) and I shut myself with my girlfriend trembling behind me in the closet. We hear the guy coming up the stairs just as the police arrive, their sirens lighting up our hiding place and just adding to the confusion. We then hear some threatening yells followed by a thud, like a body hitting the ground. We figure it's safe now, and we go downstairs to see three policemen standing over the bloody mess of our would-be assailant. He's an Asian kid—clearly a student, and he's out cold. The cops ask a few questions, don't seem to write anything down, and then take the kid away."

- SAM (PIP) ROSENFE



# AN HONEST INTERACTION

BY LIZZIE ROBERTS

I remember being very groggy when I heard footsteps plodding around my kitchen around 4 A.M. one night in October. In my slightly altered state, I had fallen asleep on the couch downstairs. One of my housemates texted me asking if I was doing dishes. I replied “No.” As I was putting my phone down I glanced over toward the kitchen, where a young man, probably college-aged, was emerging out of the pantry (guess he got a little hungry?). The words “How did you get in here?” started to form in my mouth as he saw me, eyes widened, and bolted out of the door. Me, being largely underwhelmed by most things, got up and closed the back door he’d run out of, and went upstairs to tell my housemate. She called the New Brunswick police.

Two cops arrived roughly ten minutes later, and asked us standard questions like “Did you lock all of the doors and windows?” and “What time do you think the burglar arrived?” They probably stayed for about five to ten minutes and glanced at the windows, determining that was how the young man broke in, after we told them that some of the locks on our windows were misaligned. They were sarcastic and flippant, as if they had better things to do. Which I’m sure that they did—what cops want to be dealing with a house full of five girls who should’ve checked their windows way sooner—when New Brunswick is crime-ridden with things way worse than some kid stealing a broken laptop containing an Italian Rosetta Stone disc? However, they could have been nicer and a bit more reassuring. I felt safer when my dad drove up the next day and gave us a baseball bat.

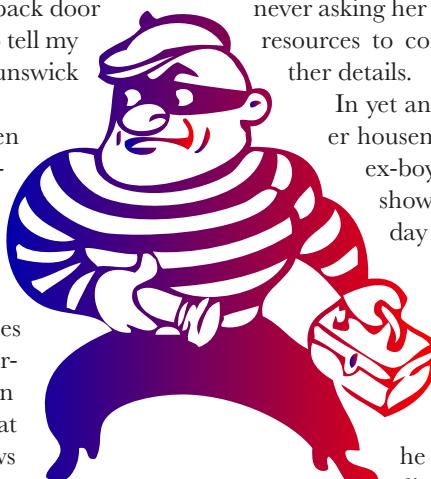
Another incident occurred very recently when my housemate was robbed at knifepoint. She was walking home from a play rehearsal from the bus stop at RSC. While on Guilden Street, close to our house, a man approached her with one hand on her backpack and one holding a switchblade toward her, demanding her bookbag. She pulled her bag away and started running, calling the cops when she got to our house. When they showed up, about seven

or eight minutes later, they asked her what ethnicity the robber was, his weight and height, what he was wearing, and if she would be able to ID him. After she said she wouldn’t be able to ID him as it was dark and the interaction was quick, the police seemed to lose interest. They asked her why she wasn’t carrying mace or a knife, and allegedly said “Men can fend themselves, but women need to be carrying protection.” They also allegedly said that it was “too bad this didn’t happen closer to Krauszer’s” because “maybe they would’ve gotten it on camera.” The whole interaction transpired within 10 minutes, never asking her if she was okay, leaving her no resources to contact if she remembered further details.

In yet another incident, one of my other housemates was being stalked by her ex-boyfriend, who, long story short, showed up at our house one Tuesday very inebriated and wouldn’t

leave, even after I forced him out of the house. We called the cops, they came, never got out of their cars, and asked him from their vehicle if he lived here. After he walked off the porch, the police left, and he returned fifteen minutes later. It was not an efficient way to handle a situation where one of my housemates could have been physically harmed.

All of the interactions I’ve had with the New Brunswick police have been less than satisfying. I realize that New Brunswick is crime-ridden. In speaking with a friend of mine who is a cop, half of the things that go on in New Brunswick outside of student neighborhoods are unreported and the police are truly spread thin. However, I received no crime alerts for any of the above situations. No crime alert for the young man that was murdered on Hartwell Street, one block away from my house. A cop’s job is to make us feel safe as city dwellers and taxpayers. Simply providing more resources and follow-up to those of us who have had run-ins with crime could be a step in the right direction to improving the crime rate in New Brunswick.



# SIMILAR SENTIMENTS

BY BECKY BURLAK

COMING UP WITH ORIGINAL LYRICISM IN MUSIC IS A TRYING TASK. MANY ARTISTS EXPRESS CERTAIN IDEAS IN THE SAME WAY, CREATING CERTAIN COMBINATIONS OF WORDS THAT RECUR THROUGHOUT MUSIC. IDEAS ARE REPEATED BECAUSE THEY MAKE SENSE AND THEY CONVEY WHAT NEEDS TO BE SAID IN THAT MUCH-COVETED ARTISTIC STYLE.



The concept of a significant other as a muse to someone's music (or, in fact, the music) has popped up quite a few times. There's Iyaz, who croons, "shawty's like a melody in my head" as though his "iPod's stuck on replay." With these clever and pretty phrases he is actually saying that he can't get the girl off his mind. How sweet.

Selena Gomez has comparable feelings towards her object of affection, telling him, "I love you like a love song" and that she keeps "hitting re-pea-pea-pea-pea-peat." Much like Mr. Replay, she loves her boo and can't stop thinking about him. Of course, Gabriella and Troy of High School Musical are on the same page, singing to each other, "you are the music in me," reiterating the emotions of the previous two songs. They emphasize that your love can be your inspiration, or the music in your life, and other lovey-dovey stuff like that.

The majority of musicians enjoy comparing love to a grand array of things. A popular example of this is the idea of love or your lover as an intoxicant. Boys Like Girls explain, singing, "I used to be love drunk." Sadly, now they're "hungover." A terrible feeling indeed, close to the one Ghost Town must feel when they proclaim to us, "love drug, love drug, overdose, now I'm wasted." Ronnie Radke laments to his girl: "the drug in me is you, and I'm so high in misery." His predicament seems to be the worst.

On the other side of the spectrum, Ke\$ha remains perfectly hippie-happy when she tells her bearded fellow, "your love is my drug." As an added example, a Russian song (that I will attempt to translate) says, "I'm at your house and drinking tea, and I seem to be getting drunk without wine," providing another great way of explaining that an object of affection can make you feel delirious and not-altogether sober.

The thought of no longer being with a loved one can be hard to bear. This experience, when expressed in music, is often romantic and all-encompassing. In a song from the soundtrack of Monsters Inc., we hear the lovely line, "I wouldn't have nothin' if I didn't have you," bringing with it the notion that your man or woman is all you need.

On the other hand, comedic singer Tim Minchin uses these words in a different fashion, informing his wife, "If I didn't have you, someone else would do." The song is of course a joke, but it uses the same intensity to make a point. Pierce the Veil, a personal favorite, takes the idea further proclaiming, "without you, there is no me," showing the depth

that true love renders. Compelled with even further devotion is Leann Rimes, who has a song full of phrases such as, "If you ever leave, baby, you would take away everything good in my life" and others that declare, "Without you, there'd be no sun in my sky. There would be no love in my life, there'd be no world left for me." While this is on the verge of extreme, there can be no dispute over the amount of love present in her heart.

People nowadays tend to have multiple partners over the course of their lives. However, when you meet the one, it's supposed to be entirely different from anything you've encountered before—a reality musicians love to play up. Nickelodeon star Miranda Cosgrove serenades her boy with the words, "No one, no guy that I've met before can make me feel so right and secure," going on to admit to him "I've never felt nothing like this."

Sharpay and Ryan (or Troy and Gabriella again, depending on your preferred HSM version) are just as sweet when they announce, "I've never had someone that knows me like you do. I've never had someone as good for me as you" highlighting the fact that your partner knows you better than anyone. Real love is supposed to be clear when it hits you, so it makes sense that Hot Chelle Rae sings, "Never have I ever felt like this before" when explaining the dazzling effect a new paramour might induce. Leona Lewis experiences these same emotions when she proclaims, "Something happened for the very first time with you" to her man, cementing the notion that when you find it, you find it, leaving no comparison to what you've felt for beaus of the past.

It doesn't matter what genre of music you look at: when it comes to love, there are similar sentiments played out by all of them. Different artists employ the same methods and phrases to voice how they're feeling. Perhaps this because the wording just sounds nice in song. It is also possible that the nature of love-related emotions is universal, and therefore, expressed rather uniformly. My advice is to try to write a song about love, then count the number of clichés you (inadvertently) conjure up. You can't be too hard on all these coinciding crooners: it is far more difficult to be original than you'd think.

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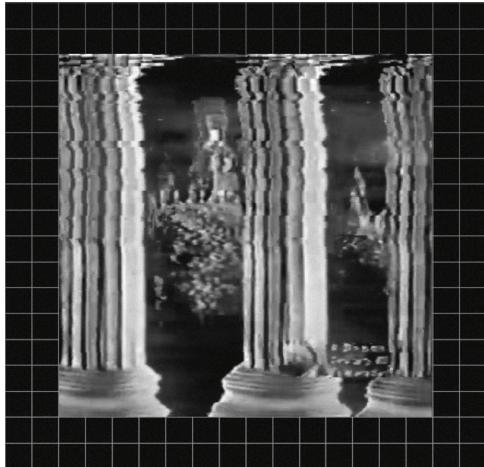
# TOP ALBUMS OF 2014 (SO FAR)

BY TIM SCHOBEL



**SUN KIL MOON**  
*BENJI* (FOLK)

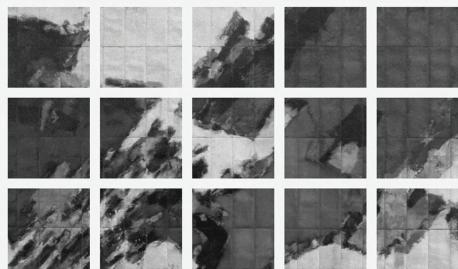
Mark Kozelek's work with Sun Kil Moon seems to have culminated in February with the release of their sixth album, *Benji*. Since 1992, Kozelek has been writing and composing music of a poignantly moving breed. His poetic, rambling narrative has made folk music personal. First with Red House Painters in the mid-nineties, and now with Sun Kil Moon, Kozelek has been stunning audiences with his raw emotion. His latest work in *Benji* is an all-telling confession about his life. The album's fourth track, "Dogs," is a prime example of Kozelek's no-holds-barred approach to this album, a song in which he ruminates on his past interactions and relationships with women that he even refers to by name. Other tracks seem perfect for their time and place here and now in America. Songs like "Pray for Newtown" and "Richard Ramirez Died Today of Natural Causes" are reflections of Kozelek's personal reactions to current events that convey his own feelings of mortality and humility to his audience. Throughout the album, a veritable orchestra of guitars, pianos, percussion and brass complement Kozelek's haunting narrative to create a tremendously emotional ambiance. From the outset of the album's first track, "Cassandra," Kozelek makes it clear that his point or thesis of this album was to translate experiences from his own life into poetry to make better sense of the trials and tribulations of this crazy world. The result has proved to be his best work yet. *Benji* is exactly the kind of album people should hear from an aging rocker.



**CYBERREALITY** ライフ  
*NEONITES* (ELECTRONIC)

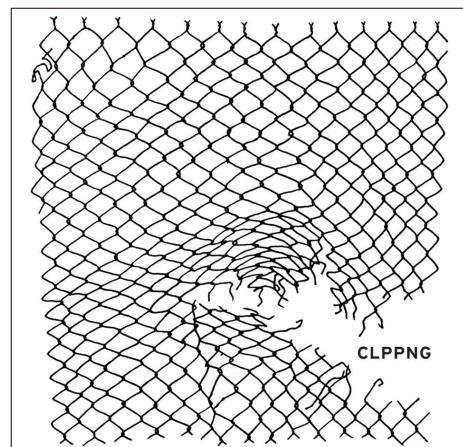
Vaporwave is a relatively new subgenre of electronic music that emerged around 2010. It is essentially an amalgamation of dot-com era nostalgia and Internet romanticism. Artists like CYBERREALITY ライフ implement the heavy use of synths over chopped and distorted samples of late-eighties, early-nineties pop music. A retro atmosphere to the beat of contemporary electronic music composition has thus defined vaporwave. With today's composition techniques and computer applications, "muzak" as we know it has been reinvented in lo-fidelity. CYBERREALITY's latest work, *Neonites*, is a must-listen for anyone looking to expand his or her musical horizons. Warning: this album is very experimental. Vaporwave has been labeled "too trippy" by many listeners. That being said, *Neonites* isn't your standard bleep-bloop video game soundtrack. Still, people ought to appreciate the innovative experimentation of artists like CYBERREALITY ライフ that set vaporwave apart from the rest of EDM. These artists release new music on Bandcamp and Soundcloud almost every day. Most of these albums are free online, so why not check them out?

## Real Estate Atlas



### REAL ESTATE ATLAS (FOLK)

As a local band from Ridgewood, New Jersey, Real Estate ought to be better known. Since their self-titled debut album in 2009, Real Estate has been composing anthems for the contemporary suburbanite. Their music is the product of a world defined by sprawling housing developments. Ridgewood is a town of large homes and mowed lawns with sprawling neighborhoods speckled by schools, strip malls, and office parks. Currently based out of Brooklyn, the members have come a long way from their sheltered suburban adolescence in the early 2000s. Coming of age themes in their work illustrate their growing distance with that suburban world, washed out by the passage of time. Real Estate's trademark mellowness is reflected in the nostalgic ambiance of their music, and it culminates in their third album, *Atlas*. Rather than dwelling on the past, however, *Atlas* marks a shift in the band's direction with deeper lyrical content and more serious themes than those reflected in previous albums. Lead vocalist Martin Courtney confronts the personal challenges that lie ahead of him in tune with guitarist Matt Mondanile's smooth melodies and Alex Bleeker's bass. Courtney's vocals come through more clearly now than in his previous work on 2011's *Days*, as the production of *Atlas* retreats from lo-fidelity to make his lyrics more intelligible and powerful than ever before. Despite the unprecedented gravity of the issues confronted in this album's lyrical content, Real Estate maintains their classic mellow optimism even when faced with future unknowns on *Atlas*.



### CLIPPING. CLPPNG (HIP-HOP/RAP)

clipping. is a Los Angeles-based experimental hip-hop project composed of rapper Daveed Diggs and producers William Hutson and Jonathan Snipes. Together, they create a sound that has been known to kill headphone users. By layering harsh noise over Diggs' flowing slew of clever rhymes, CLPPNG's unorthodox production techniques and high-speed rapping make it the most innovative hip-hop release since Death Grips' *Government Plates* last November. While clipping.'s production maintains some of the raw energy that defined Death Grips' sound, Diggs' rapping distinguishes CLPPNG from other recent releases in the sheer quantity of information he conveys in each verse. The climax of this album is its eighth track, "Get Up," which opens with the high-pitched beeping of an alarm clock. Diggs quickly begins the first verse by firing off rhymes at the pace of a machine gun in beat with the metronome of the alarm, a sound that changes in frequency at each chorus with Mariel Jacoda's singing. That piercing alarm in "Get Up" is exemplary of how Hutson and Snipes maintain their audience's attention with experimental sampling and harsh noise throughout CLPPNG. If you like rap, and especially if you like Death Grips, then check out clipping.'s music on Bandcamp.

# SEARCHING FOR SMILE

WORDS BY DALTON MACK  
ART BY KATHERINE SCHNEIDER

Y'see, I grew up on my dad's music. While my contemporaries were listening to the Backstreet Boys, Linkin Park, and OAR (those were the first ones that came to mind, just roll with it), I became intensely familiar with the discographies of the Beatles and Beach Boys, as well as the stories behind the bands. I learned how Brian Wilson sought to top *Rubber Soul* with *Pet Sounds* and how the Beatles fired back with *Revolver*. Brian looked to top that, and embarked upon putting together an album called *SMiLE*, one that would be even better, he felt, than *Pet Sounds*. This album would feature a suite based upon the Classical Elements (earth, air, water, and fire), touch upon westward expansion, and also include tracks whose main purpose was to make one laugh, or perhaps put a *SMiLE* on their face.

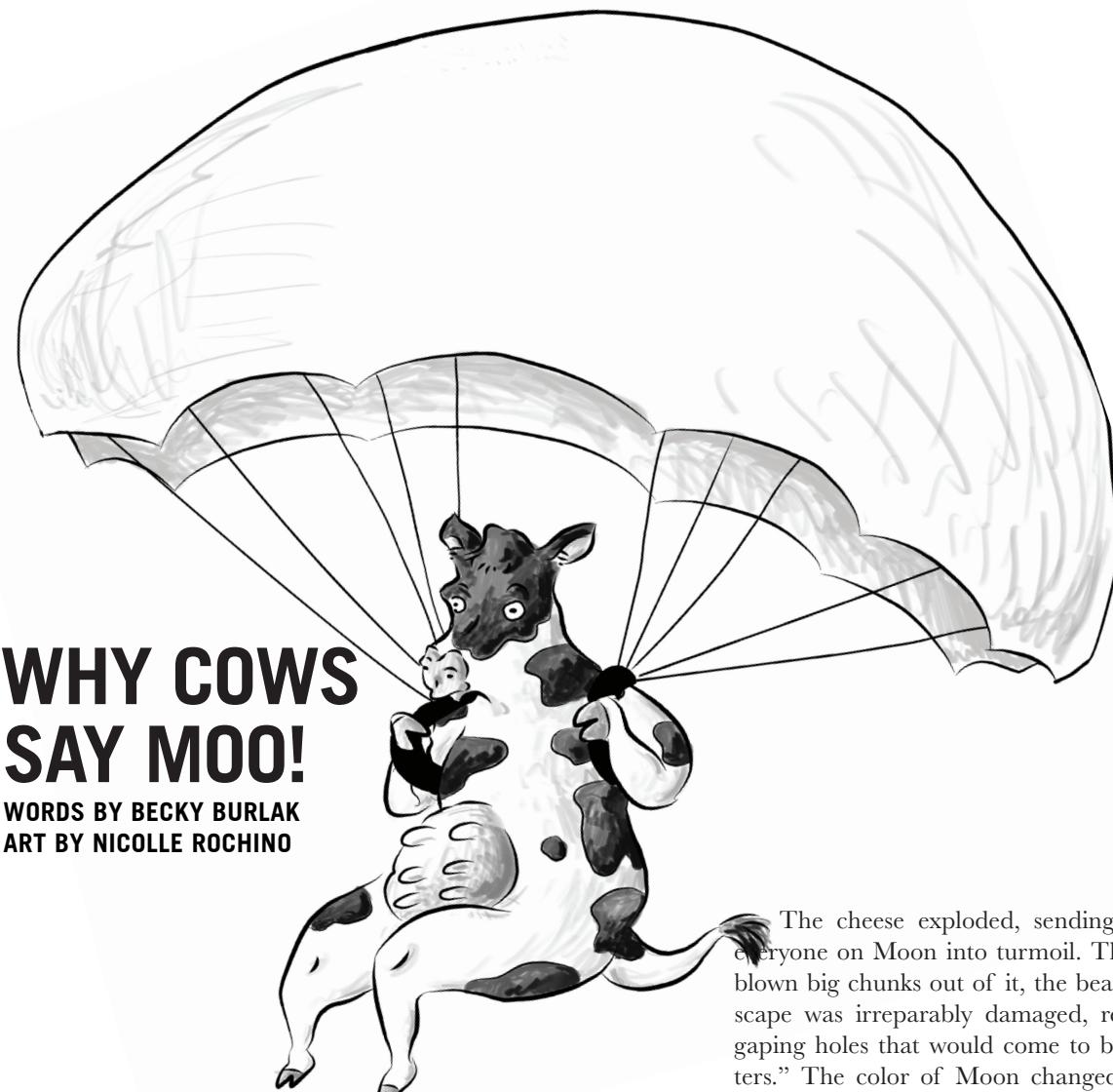
Unfortunately, the dream was dashed. Chalk it up to Brian's deteriorating mental state, blowback from band member Mike Love about Van Dyke Parks' inscrutable lyrics and finally, the realization Brian had that the Beatles had "got to the sound first," upon hearing "Strawberry Fields Forever" in his car. *SMiLE* was shelved, and through the next few years, songs from the project trickled out in various forms, many on the panned *Smiley Smile* record, others from the 1967-71 period, and some on a 30th anniversary boxed set.

As a music-obsessive, this bothered me. An album to rank in the upper tier of rock albums, rubbing elbows with *Pet Sounds* and *Sgt. Pepper*, and I can't hear it? This was a problem. I had first learned the *SMiLE* story at about age eight or nine, and was hooked. I began using my dad's 56k dialup Internet to search for information, eventually finding a wealth of bootlegs traded by fellow obsessives through

mail. "Unsurpassed Masters," "Vigotone," and "Heroes and Vibrations," were just a few that would show up on my doorstep in the early 2000s. I listened in wide-eyed (wide-eared?) wonder to some of the sessions, ones that were inconsistent but had streaks of brilliant symphonic sound peppered throughout. Unfortunately with no editing software in my price range (read: in excess of zero dollars), I couldn't make my own version—merely listen to others who had tried.

Luckily, as with all technology, things become cheaper and more available. Around 2006-07, I acquired a fairly rudimentary editing program entitled Sony ACID Music Studio, ironic because it was acid that had long been implicated in Brian's mental decline. I locked myself in the den at home for a weekend and emerged with my version of *SMiLE*, culled from dozens of bootlegs (I had more versions of "Heroes and Villains" than people had Beach Boys songs in their iTunes libraries). This was a proud moment, the culmination of years of research and poring over countless takes, deciding whether the "in the cantina" or "my children were raised" or "at three-score and five" portion of "Heroes and Villains" would have made Brian's final cut.

The *SMiLE Sessions* box set was released in 2011, giving the public hours upon hours of studio material as well as their sequencing and song choice for what *SMiLE* would have sounded like circa late 1966/early 1967. 15-year-old me delighted in the fact that it was very near identical to what I had cobbled together. 19-year-old me felt like a kid on Christmas morning. And 22-year-old me implores you to listen to the record. Now. 



# WHY COWS SAY MOO!

WORDS BY BECKY BURLAK  
ART BY NICOLLE ROCHINO

Once upon a time, the moon was a flourishing and vibrant place to live, inhabited mostly by these creatures called "cows." Cows were super strong, able to talk, walk, and do anything they put their minds to. These grand beings produced the most delicious drink possibly imaginable: it was called milk. Milk was tasty, healthy, full of nutrients and even useful for battling a cold. Life was great for the Cows of Moon. Everyone was very happy, living in peace and prosperity.

That was all until one fateful day. Scientists on Moon had recently discovered that if you let milk go bad, it could eventually become this more solid substance called "cheese." A scientist was experimenting with the cheese and unknowingly put a substance into it that could easily trigger an explosion upon any physical contact. The scientist went for lunch, leaving the cheese unguarded, not knowing any better. Another scientist came into the testing lab shortly after and accidentally swiped the cheese with his elbow. That was all it took.

KABOOM.

The cheese exploded, sending everything and everyone on Moon into turmoil. The explosion had blown big chunks out of it, the beautiful green landscape was irreparably damaged, replaced by giant gaping holes that would come to be known as "craters." The color of Moon changed too, emitting a strange yellowish tinge from the coating of cheese. Only the cows survived the disastrous day, falling onto Earth. They were alive, but the fall had weakened them terribly. They were now no longer super strong, they couldn't walk upright, and they had lost most of their ability for language.

Today, millions of years later, the descendants of the original cows are still trying to tell people their story. They try to say "MOON! MOON!" but they are just too weak. All they can say is "MOOOOOOOOO!"

THE END





# PRESSURE AND PLEASURE

BY KATELYN DEVINE

In the midst of a deep conversation, a good date, a life-changing book, or a fun party, sometimes, I pause for the passing of time, and my method of actively being grateful. Well aware that one day I will fondly remember these days once they have passed, my ritual allows me to think that I have already outsmarted the chance of future nostalgia, and it puts me at ease. To be fondly appreciative of an experience as it is happening does away with the possibility of taking the moment for granted.

My imprecise version of Zen is pieced together from the teachings of a few books, lessons learned while traveling, and the words of my oracles, my friends. I

first consciously thought about “living in the now,” in high school. Back then, on quiet weekend nights in our hometown, my friends and I shared a ritual. We would pile into someone’s car and drive a mile down Atlantic Avenue to the Manasquan Inlet. Once parked we would roll down the windows, listen to our latest favorite music, smoke an occasional performative cigarette, and stare out at the thin stretch of water that separated the Atlantic Ocean from the Manasquan River, and Pt. Pleasant from Manasquan beach. Sometimes we played headlight tag with the cars parked across the way. We would sit here, making plans, texting whoever was in the know about where a party was.

We spent hours there, asking, moaning, stressing vowels, “What are we going to dooooooo tonight?” On nights when there were no plans to be had, we stayed at the inlet all night, just talking. Sometimes we felt a sense of disappointment that we were not out enjoying ourselves, talking to potential dates, making “the best” out of our high school years. My friend Vin, especially, was usually first to leave the inlet on nights when the promise of evening plans fell through.

“I’m tired you guys, if we aren’t going to do anything I’m going home.” We all felt like that sometimes, we all got bored of the inlet. “Don’t you always hope that there’s going to be a keg and a party waiting for us at the inlet one of these nights?” Vin asked me once. “Isn’t that why we always come here?” His words speak shamelessly to the priorities of bored suburban kids in a beach town. We did not know exactly why we always returned to the inlet, we just knew it was our spot.

“At least we live near the beach, so we don’t have to park in like, a mall parking lot or something when we have nowhere else to go,” I would sometimes offer. I doubt the comment helped Vin’s perpetual disappointment. Somewhere buried in my

words may have been the beginning of awareness that the inlet, with its choppy waters and seagulls overhead, was more than just a place for my friends and I to wait, it was our reality.

“Live in the now, Vin,” my friend Kat suggested one night. Her simple remark resonated. She meant be present. She meant enjoy our company. She meant sit in this car and smell the salt air and hear the melody coming from the radio and watch the boats that glide by in front of us and feel the cool breeze as it drifts down into the open sunroof. She meant to say that this moment is all we have, so be here now, rather than letting concerns for what will happen next consume you. In those days our concern was the possibility of being invited to a party. Today the concern is about how our lives will look and feel, and what truths we will live, when our time at college is over.

When a certain life event, a fun night out, or an incredible novel comes to a close, the pressure to appreciate it feels heavier. In my final weeks as an undergraduate at Rutgers, I find myself remembering Kat’s words to Vin: “live in the now.” It’s not always so simple, especially considering the small talk questioning from neighbors and uncles asking, “So what’s next after graduation?” While I research careers and graduate programs at my desk beside a window that overlooks Easton Avenue, I pause to remind myself that this is my reality, and it is best to simply take delight in being here. It is a practice in balance, making preparations for the future while being present for all the little moments. It is a welcomed pleasure, the awareness and practice of just living in the now. 

# AN IMMIGRANT

BY POOJA KOLLURI

In the far away distance there is a dotted consciousness, translucent and absorbed by the glittering stars that pass overhead, unseen, seen, eaten by the hungry to feed hope, touched by the cold to feel warmth, adored by the solitary, surrounded and alone all at once.

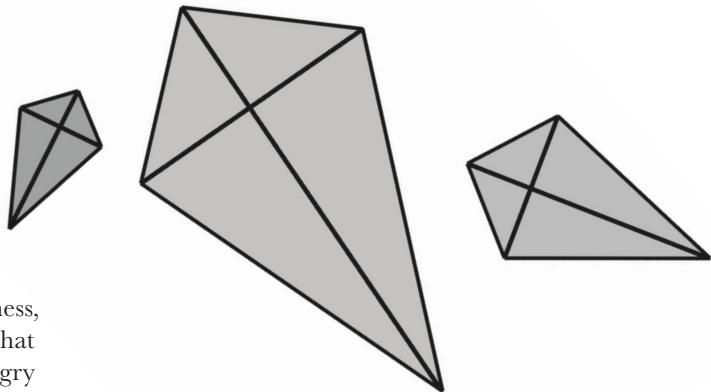
I believed in it once, following the map hidden in the sun to an island drenched in neon, trapped and racing around paper covered rectangles of gold, where the people seemed to smell my value and disregard my eyes, a skill I never understood, but learned anyway.

Here are many days of pastel layered kites flying through diaphanous skies, when I live in the peace of an unaltered state of being, where my fleeting needs are an opaque heavy smoke I can throw into the ground and shatter,

yet arrives a day or two when the sky is navy and and I don't want to look up at the soft white stars because I'm enamored with the cold slimy blades of grass and how beautiful it would be to fall flat and let the earth swallow me into its arms, to feel a love I didn't think I'd need.

So I create a fractal existence, a repeating pattern with no desire to be unbroken, in a swirl of frozen and ignored emotion.

Among the deafening beasts and shrinking foliage, I find you, beautiful and forgiving beyond



anything I have ever experienced, and when I look at you, it was as if you have always loved me, though I don't believe you, and I don't know if I ever will—yet you follow me, and soon, I take your hand, because I am foolish enough to embrace a flame.

“What are you doing here?” I ask, two times a month, and you will sometimes tell me about a mother, a father, a family or you will explain your fear of temporal voids and your desire to fill them with beauty, a concept which I grow to understand, when I, without realising, filled a void with you.

A steady ticking echoes through the bright yellow meadows where we fly—the space between the sound gets louder and resounds in the vacuum cove of our brains, a reminder that some day, we'll want that noise to end.

On, we travel exposed, through a dizzying spell of a speckled blizzard, when I have turned blind and you have gone numb, yet you can see the gleam of a love in my dead eyes and I can feel the warmth of a heart from your icicle fingers, so we wander forward with only the hope of freezing, melting, evaporating together. 

**KIDS**

BY TONI KWADZOGAH

1. You will hurt. It is unavoidable. It is inevitable. Sometimes you can embrace it and move on. Sometimes you have to shove it away and avoid it until it clings to you, demands to be felt, refuses to leave until you let it pass. And that's okay. Everyone has broken down and cried in the produce section of the grocery store at least once.
2. Not everyone will like you. And that's their loss, not yours. All it means is that you get to save your greatness for the people who deserve it.
3. People are mean. You will be mean, you will hurt people, you will do stupid, shitty things. But it's okay as long as you make amends and try not to do it again. Not everyone will apologize when they've hurt someone, but you're not everyone.
4. Sometimes people will know better than you and you have to shut up and listen. Sometimes people will not know better than you and you have to make them shut up and listen. Sometimes people will listen, sometimes they won't. You have to learn to pick your battles.
5. You cannot control everything. But you can sometimes control the way you react to things. Don't be like your mama. Be graceful under fire.
6. Always try to be kind. But don't be hard on yourself if someone tests your patience. You're only human. And sometimes people don't deserve kindness.
7. Some days—most days, if you're like me—you will not feel like working. You will want to put shit off until it is unavoidable. Don't do it. Make yourself do the work. You will feel so much better when you're on the other side of it. There are exceptions to this rule, like sickness. Focus on making yourself well to do your best work.
8. This is one from your grandmother that is perfect to pass on. You've probably heard her say this once or twice. Sometimes you need mindless TV. Sometimes you're gonna feel overwhelmed and tired and through with everything, and that would be the time to drop it all. Drop all your work, sit in front of your TV (whatever you're using nowadays, I dunno, I'm too old to care) and watch old episodes of Cutthroat Kitchen. You've probably heard me talk about it. Like 20 minutes ago. Get my old BluRays and turn it on.
9. Never be afraid to be yourself. If you're my kid, you're magnificent. Be fucking magnificent. Be the best version of yourself, even if you don't know who or what that is. Your best self is a constant moving target, so you're gonna flounder trying to figure yourself out. But that's okay. We're all works in progress.
10. If you're ever at a loss, just take a deep breath, close your eyes and ask yourself, "What would Eartha Kitt do?"



BY DALTON MACK

# FLOWERS

I found my boutonnière from prom  
In the bottom dresser drawer at home four years later  
The memories faded from a brilliant fuchsia  
To a crackled burgundy  
Like one pressed inside a scrapbook  
By a wide-eyed child, full of wonder

You probably didn't keep your corsage  
Why would you, it's not as if the day meant anything  
Beyond a pair of brown-haired children dancing  
Platonic, but one half spell-bound nonetheless  
And who holds onto empty memories  
When the prospect of tomorrow overwhelms

I bought a red rose three years ago  
From a small shop in a train station  
Bouquets seemed too extravagant and redundant  
A gesture steeped in tradition  
And placating the status quo  
Plus we were all short on money at the time

You placed it in a makeshift vase  
Made from a discarded liquor bottle  
Apt for what we had  
A fire built from sparks and kindling  
Labeled forty percent by volume  
Lasting well beyond the embers fading

I will give you a flower  
Not because it is what one does  
But for you, a child of nature  
Wondrous as the globes of dew on a blade of grass  
When morning peeks its head over a rolling hill  
May find something in it beyond my sphere

You  
I pause here  
With nothing creeping in the background  
To regret or reflect upon  
For now, merely a gift from a garden  
To another flower.



POEM BY CHELSEA SIRICO  
PHOTOS BY MICHELLE CHEN

*Condict Street is collapsing.*

A construction site crumbles the tar and asphalt  
Machete-like wheels are crushing the soil  
And no longer bloom the Chrysanthemums...

Kilograms of weight and a carpenter's calloused body machine  
Docked in yellow clad,  
Cocking his pickaxe back,  
The city is swollen and it won't shut up.

Cries come a-creeping from off her blacktop  
Like steam after a cold summer's rain  
Lies are screamed out of the mouths of our mayors  
As they calculate fame in our consumerist culture.

*Everything is man-made now,*

Once, we were a baby,  
Tucked inside a mama  
Snug and still.  
But mama is melting in this  
Ongoing 21st century heatwave,  
The world is being rattled.

*When I am here, or here, or there,*

I no longer need to look to the stars  
If ever I want to find my way home.  
There is a crane there of many stories  
That don't end well  
I can see it now,  
From across the river  
Down the highway  
Contorting the surrounding space  
Making it seem that even infinity is marketed to their label.  
And in my nightmares  
I am forced to bow below its presence

There is a train station in the downtown  
Spitting out and swallowing the outer-city wealth  
Who will rob our city of its kindness.

In my nightmares, the train comes off its tracks,  
The construction site, lacking support from the city, comes down in a crash,  
With no one to report this tragic event,  
This empty city is all that's left in the end.





You gave me a token when I needed it most.

I stood at the entrance of the Broad Street Line with my hands in the air, blood on my palm from falling on the sidewalk just a few stops earlier. An exasperated sigh escaped from my lips, followed by a string of profanity that I could no longer contain. I limped to the police officer, the colossal bruise on my knee getting worse by the second, and desperately pleaded to get through the gates. He said no. I was more than an hour late and I was going to give up. I was going to scrape together some cash and go back home and sit around and mope and ice my knee and bandage my hand because, for the love of God, nothing about this night could possibly get worse.

Three of my rides to the city fell through, I was an hour late, and my phone was dead. I fell in the parking lot, I cried, and I bled. I tried to buy a one-way ticket and could only buy a \$25 Freedom Card, which ended up being stolen three days later anyway. I stood at the entrance of the Broad Street Line and the machine wouldn't take my money and I threw my hands in the air. My knee was burning and colorfully bruising and my hand was bleeding and I felt alone.

Until you gave me a token, right then, when I needed it most.

I asked your name and you said it was Jake. I called you a lifesaver and shook your hand, saying you couldn't imagine how frustrated I had become. You said that you could tell I needed some help, and hey, you had an extra token anyway. I got on the train and never saw you again, but I didn't forget you, Jake. I won't forget you.

You taught me to pay it forward. I did, the very next week. I helped a stranger on a train and I brought her joy. In bringing her joy, I felt joy as well. I became like you. I did a small, seemingly insignificant thing, and in the process helped someone when she needed it most. It didn't take much, just some heart and a smile.

It seemed like just a token, Jake, but for less than a dollar, you renewed my faith in humanity. You reminded me of the little things, and the profound effect that they can have. You got me to where I was trying to go, and you did so without need for kudos or reward. You didn't think, you just acted, and you were decent in a typically indecent world.

You gave me a token when I needed it most. Then I got myself a Band-Aid and brushed off the pain and frustration, and I made it to where I was supposed to be.

All thanks to you.

Dear Future Love,

Yesterday afternoon I was walking in Tel Aviv en route to Jerusalem, along this middle passage with pop-up restaurants and trees, budding flowers, and the occasional sun-blackened dog shit. Every ten meters or so a couple was walking side by side. Some had their arms wrapped around each other like branches and vines; some were swaying tulips and murmuring lilacs. With each couple I saw, I became more aware of how single I felt. The physical weight I was carrying of two overstuffed bags seemed to have increased by the smoothness of which it seemed the couples were gliding with, towards their lovely and treacherous journeys together. At least they had each other, which made them one significant step ahead of me. I still have yet to find a suitable partner.

When I'm with a man in public and I suspect there to be at least one speck of romantic energy, I pretend in my mind that it exists and that everyone who passes us or sees us together suspects the same. It's my secret blossom of hope, that if I foster this dream, it will one day be the sweetest thing I could ever feel. Because I see it everywhere I go. I wonder if it's true for the couples I see, or if some of them also pretend.

I embrace my character as a hopeless romantic. I know what love is because I've been in love before and still somewhat am with someone from my past although I've never been in a relationship. However, I've certainly had affectionate affairs and hookups that were more than satisfactory. I've also experienced utter disbelief with the unravelling of past circumstances and still sporadically amaze myself with the beauty of the men I have found myself with.

There is nothing like the shock of unannounced serendipity. Or the shattering of short-sighted, self-perceived beauty, measured by a handheld mirror that reflects only what we tell it, by the foreign hands of a more beautiful man. It's the most wonderstruck wrecking imaginable when this person falls in love with you, and when you fall in love with him. True love is the most honest thing that can ever transpire between two living souls; it's when I can share my ugliest with someone else and have him not judge me the way I judge myself, and vice versa. When I can bare him to see my ugly, ashy feet and flecks of parched skin on my un-moisturized face in the morning with my hair undone, dry as the Israeli air. And he wouldn't care. Beyond the physical shells, I should be able to share with him every reason for my tears when he sees them and not have to hide myself in my room when they fall. He'll understand every reason "why I do that" but ask me anyway and endlessly find ways to make me smile. Hopefully we'll always be adults that think like children.

When I find the one, I want him to see the "best" in me, gain a deeper love for me when he sees the worst, and effortlessly bring out the incommunicable, unknowable best, light-years beyond what I envision to be the best that already lives in me. We'll struggle together through everything, but by our love, look like we're gliding like the endless couples in Tel Aviv on a summer like day. Our hearts will soar and soar past skyscrapers and roller-coaster hills right into the oceans of our eyes. Even when I drown, breathing will be the only thing possible when he lays there and stares at me with eyes that define absolute understanding and acceptance of everything that I am.

Sincerely yours,

Nikko Espina



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